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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/743,150	12/23/2003	Shinji Kato	0649-0938P	7489

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EXAMINER
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SPISICH, GEORGE D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3616

DATE MAILED: 07/05/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/743,150

Applicant(s)

KATO ET AL.

Examiner

George D. Spisich

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 April 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/23/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP2001-253218 (provided in Applicant's IDS and relating to USPN 6,494,472).

JP '218 discloses a suspension cross member attached to the underside of a vehicle body in such a manner to extend in a transverse direction of a vehicle comprising upper (8) and lower (9) plates which are disconnect from each other in the vicinity of bifurcation proximal end portions at ends of the suspension cross member where the suspension cross member extends to be bifurcated into a forward portion located on a longitudinally forward side of the suspension cross member and a rearward portion located on a longitudinally rearward side of the suspension cross member to define openings and which are jointed together along "circumferential" edges thereof to thereby have a "closed cross section".

JP '218 discloses support points (12) for forward arms of a pair of lower arms that support wheels, the support points disposed on the forward portions of the upper

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and lower member plates at external positions to the "closed cross section", respectively. There are support points (near 8G, 9G) for rearward arms of the pair of lower arms which are inserted through openings, the support points disposed on the rear portions at internal positions of the "closed cross section" respectively. There are bulkheads (11) provided between the upper and lower member plates transversely inwardly of the support points for the rearward arms in such a manner that a "circumferential" edge of each of the bulkheads of each of the bulkheads extends longitudinally to a rear of the vehicle from a disconnection initiating point located on a forward side of the opening along inner sides of the upper and lower plate members so as to be jointed to the upper and lower plate member. The bulkheads are jointed to the upper and lower member plates at least in the vicinity of the disconnection initiating point.

The opening dimensions of the opening increase "gradually" in the vicinity of the disconnection initiating point. The term "gradually" is a relative term that can be met by any opening.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2001-253218 (provided in Applicant's IDS).

JP '218 has been discussed in the prior rejection. Although JP '218 discloses bulkheads (11) with "circumferential" flanges (11B and 11C) provided along the "circumferential" edge of the bulkhead, and it may be interpreted that since the flanges "extend" along the length of bulkhead (11) as the bulkhead extends toward the opening, then it may be interpreted that the flanges extend toward the opening, to more clearly address this language Examiner is maintaining that the reversal of the position of the bulkhead would be obvious.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to reverse the position of the bulkhead such that the flanges more specifically extends towards the opening, since it has been held that a mere reversal of essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Einstein*, 8 USPQ 167.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Prior Art does not disclose the suspension member as claimed further having a support member jointed to the bulkheads and extending in a longitudinal direction towards the front of the vehicle.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Suzuki (USPN 6,494,472), Kasuga (USPN 6,170,906), Suzuki (USPN 6,402,172), Suzuki (USPN 6,409,216), Suzuki (USPUB 2001/0022437).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George D. Spisich whose telephone number is (571) 272-6676. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00 to 6:30 except alt. Friday.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571) 272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

George D. Spisich  
June 22, 2005



  
PAUL N. DICKSON  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600